

Chapter 2

Base Realignment and Closure

The Department of Navy conducts environmental restoration work at installations affected by the four rounds of base closures in a similar manner to cleanups at active installations with two major distinctions; 1) cleanup is not funded from ER,N Account, and 2) cleanup funding prioritization decisions are based primarily on the schedule for the property's economic reuse, with relative risk as a consideration.

The Base Realignment and Closure Act of 1988 (PL 100-526) (BRAC I) and the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (PL 101-510) (BRAC II, BRAC III and BRAC IV) required the environmental restoration efforts at bases being closed or realigned to be funded from a separate BRAC account. It was the intent of Congress that closing bases would not have to compete for cleanup funds with active installations. It also provides an impetus for quicker cleanup and turnover of land to the public or private sector for economic reuse. Local Redevelopment Authorities (LRA) represent communities in developing plans for base reuse. The LRA is recognized by DoD as the entity responsible for developing or implementing the communities' redevelopment plan.

In July 1993, the President announced a five-part program to speed economic recovery for communities where military bases are slated to close. As a result, a BRAC Cleanup Team (BCT) has been established at each of the Navy's closing bases where property is available for transfer to the community. The BCT is empowered with the authority, responsibility and accountability for environmental cleanup programs at these installations, with the emphasis on taking necessary actions to facilitate reuse and redevelopment. The BCT works closely with the LRA to exchange cleanup information related to redevelopment plans, priorities and decisions. The DON is working closely with regulators to use innovative technologies and management approaches that will allow bases to be cleaned up even earlier than originally planned. The DON made significant progress in the BRAC arena over the past year. Navy and Marine Corps personnel are committed to "Fast-Track" cleanup at closing bases as demonstrated by the following accomplishments:



The former NAS Moffett Field has been transferred to NASA. A dirigible hangar is in the background.

- Completing environmental baseline surveys at BRAC I-IV installations to determine the environmental condition of property and to document the status of the cleanup program.
- Partnering with regulators to develop the most cost-effective cleanup estimates and schedules.
- Completing the BRAC Cleanup Plans (BCPs) for BRAC I-IV installations.
- Integrating study and design work efforts between Comprehensive Long-Term Environmental Navy (CLEAN) and Remedial Action Contract (RAC) contract personnel to accelerate cleanup.



Cleanup underway at NAS Cecil Field, a BRAC III closure.

Site Status - As of the end of FY97, DON had identified 998 sites on BRAC installations. Currently, there are 341 sites in the study/analysis phases, 254 sites in cleanup phases and 403 sites with response complete.

Environmental Condition of Property - As of the end of FY97, DON identified a total of 117,423 acres available for transfer from BRAC I-IV installations. This is an increase of 9,149 acres from the end of FY96. To date, 7,159 acres have been transferred to other federal agencies and 1,693 acres have been transferred to communities for economic reuse.

The Community Environmental Response Facilitation Act (CERFA) of 1992 required

DoD to identify “clean” parcels on BRAC installations for early transfer. A classification system was created to help identify CERFA clean acres. This classification system is intended to provide a process for identifying CERFA uncontaminated parcels and other parcels suitable or unsuitable for transfer by lease or deed. There are seven classifications for environmental condition of property. The acreages in the seven categories are provided in Chapter 5 for selected BRAC installations.

The seven classifications are described briefly on the next page. Parcels categorized as 1 through 4 are suitable for transfer by deed, those categorized as 5 and 6 are unsuitable for transfer by deed until all remedial actions have been taken, and parcels categorized as 7 require evaluation.

The FY 1997 Defense Authorization Act contains a provision (Section 334) that modified CERCLA Section 120(h)(3) to permit “early transfer” of federal real estate to private parties before all cleanup work has been completed. Under the early transfer authority, the EPA and the state (for NPL properties) and the state (for non-NPL properties) may defer the CERCLA requirement that precludes property transfer prior to final cleanup. No early transfers occurred during FY97.

Category 1

Areas where no storage, release, or disposal of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, including no migration of these substances from adjacent areas.

Category 2

Areas where only storage of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, but no release, disposal, or migration from adjacent properties has occurred.

Category 3

Areas where storage and release, release, disposal, and/or migration of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, but at concentrations that do not require a removal action or remedial action.

Category 4

Areas where storage and release, release, disposal, and/or migration of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, and all remedial actions necessary to protect human health and the environment have been taken.

Category 5

Areas where storage and release, release, disposal, and/or migration of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, removal and/or remedial actions are under way, but all required remedial actions have not yet been taken.

Category 6

Areas where storage and release, release, disposal, and/or migration of hazardous substances or petroleum products has occurred, but required response actions have not yet been initiated.

Category 7

Areas that are unevaluated or that require additional evaluation. They do not, with certainty, fit any of the previous area types because evaluation efforts have not occurred, are ongoing, or are inconclusive.

Redevelopment Plans - For BRAC I-IV installations, 33 redevelopment plans have been approved, and an additional 6 plans have been developed and are awaiting approval. For 4 installations, these plans will not be done because they are Federal-to-Federal transfers.



Taking soil samples at the former NAS Moffett Field

Cleanup Strategy - DON's cleanup strategy for FY97, due in part to a decrease in cleanup funding and the environmental congressional funding ceiling, was to:

- ◇ Fund all cleanup projects where there is an imminent threat to human health and the environment.
- ◇ Prioritize funding for cleanup projects for which there is specific reuse and a property recipient has been identified.
- ◇ Support the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) and BRAC Cleanup Team (DON, EPA and state regulatory personnel) cleanup priorities based on reuse.
- ◇ Fund high priority site characterization studies
- ◇ Support development of the Findings of Suitability for Transfer/Lease (FOST/L) documentation for economic revitalization efforts.
- ◇ Fund cleanup in accordance with DON's Environmental Policy Memorandum 95-02 "Consideration of Future Land Use in Determining Cleanup Standards for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Property" of 17 Aug 95.
- ◇ Continue to support a bias towards cleanup versus study due to cost effectiveness and time savings.
- ◇ Develop an aggressive execution schedule to ensure continued full obligation of available funds by the end of each fiscal year, while maintaining a healthy funds expenditures profile.

Regulator Involvement - As we move into FY98, DON continues to:

- ◇ Partner with BCTs to refine the scope and type of cleanup projects which should be accomplished, and to prioritize projects to be accomplished or budgeted.
- ◇ Provide support to the Fast-Track Cleanup Implementation Work Group.
- ◇ Provide BRAC Cleanup Plan Abstracts which establish a baseline and metrics to assess program progress.
- ◇ Participate in and support BRAC Cleanup Team training.
- ◇ Conduct an OSD/Navy Community Conference to exchange ideas and update communities on cleanup issues at BRAC installations.